

November 11, 1976

SUBSTANTIVE INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT TO CONGRESS

Substantive intelligence support for Congress simply means providing up-to-date information on and analysis of foreign developments of topical interest to a wide variety of committees, members, and committee staffs. It does not encompass information on CIA operations.

While there has been no legal requirement to provide this intelligence to Congress, the Agency has been supplying it to a growing Congressional market for three years. This is a decided break with the past when substantive intelligence usually was provided only to CIA oversight committees through semi-annual DCI briefings.

The initiative was Director Colby's. Mr. Colby felt quite strongly that a Congress determined to have a more forceful voice in national security and foreign affairs could play its role more constructively if it was well informed. Mr. Bush endorses this view, too.

Most often substantive intelligence is transmitted through briefings, but we also provide written material such as biographic reports on foreign officials, maps, and intelligence memoranda on various issues. The seven committees which have some oversight role also receive the National Intelligence

Daily.^{*} Access to the Daily is restricted to members and a few key staffers. With the Daily, the committees have an opportunity to see the same all-source intelligence being presented policy-makers. The President's Daily Brief is never provided the Hill. Documents which deal with sensitive on-going negotiations also are withheld.

While the DCI still spends a good deal of time on the Hill, the substantive support is provided principally by CIA analysts talking to members and staffers. The Intelligence Directorate, which handles most of these briefings, has a small staff responsible for substantive intelligence liaison with the Congress. During the first three quarters of 1976, this staff was involved in briefings for 29 subcommittees, 66 individual senators or congressmen, and over 100 committee staffers. The subjects ranged from the technical aspects of Soviet weapons to the state of Tito's health.

As you might expect, there are inherent problems in providing intelligence to Congress. The most serious one is that CIA's intelligence has been used as ammunition against some Administration foreign policy or national security proposals. Press leaks of substantive intelligence have been rare. Still, the opportunity for trying to make political mileage with

^{*}Senate Armed Services, Senate Appropriations, Senate Foreign Relations, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, House Armed Services, House Appropriations, and House International Relations

press leaks of sensitive intelligence remains worrisome.

Is it all worthwhile? From the Agency's point of view, it is useful. We have shown members that CIA is far more than a clandestine enigma. For its part, the Congress certainly looks on the new relationship as a valuable one to which its members have a right.

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